

REMARKS

Claims 16-28 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-15 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and claims 16-28 added. No new matter is added by this Amendment.

I. Restriction Requirement

In response to the October 17, 2006 Restriction Requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Group I, claims 1-5 and 12-15, with traverse.

As indicated above, claims 16-20 are added and claims 1-15 are canceled. The newly added claims include "a clamp for clamping a pipe structure." Thus, the newly added claims read on elected claims 1-5 and 12-15.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all claims is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one Group of claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

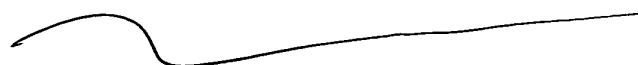
Thus, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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WPB:RAC/axl

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: January 16, 2007

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